

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION NATO

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THE FOL TEL FROM AMEM MOSCOW DATED JAN 28, 1974 TO
SECSTATE WASHDC INFO CINCPAC HONG KONG LENINGRAD LONDON MANILA
PARIS PEKING SAIGON TAIPEI TOKYO USUN IS REPTED:

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 1321

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CH, UR, VS

SUBJECT: SOVIETS SKIRT PITFALLS IN HEAVY PRESS TREATMENT
OF PARACELS DISPUTE

REF: MOSCOW 1036

1. SOVIET PROPAGANDISTS DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE
ATTENTION OVER WEEKEND TO CHINESE AGGRESSIVENESS IN
PARCEL ISLANDS DISPUTE. CITING MEDIA IN NEW YORK,
TOKYO, MANILA, NEW DELHI, LONDON, AND PARIS, PRAVDA
JANUARY 26 AND 27 PRESENTED PICTURE OF AN EXPANSIONIST
CHINA FLAUNTING UN STRICTURES AGAINST NON-USE
OF FORCE, UPSETTING ASIAN BALANCE OF POWER, AND CAUSING
ALARM THROUGHOUT ASIA. SELECTION OF FOREIGN PRESS
REFERENCES LEANS TO TWO EXPLANATIONS FOR CHINESE
ACTIONS: DESIRE TO DOMINATE ASIA AND NEED TO DISTRACT
ATTENTIONOF CHINESE PEOPLE FROM INTERNAL PROBLEMS.

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2. SOVIETS HAVE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS WITH HANDLING

PARACELS ISSUE, AND THESE MAY EXPLAIN WHY SOVIET CRITICISM OF PRC HAS SO FAR BEEN INDIRECT. FOR ONE THING, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR MOSCOW TO PAINT SAIGON AS AN INNOCENT AND AGGRIEVED PARTY. MORE SERIOUSLY, IT APPEARS THAT SOVIETS RECOGNIZE PARACELS AS CHINESE. LATEST ATLAS IN OUR POSSESSION, PUBLISHED BY NEW TIMES LAST AUGUST, CALLS ISLANDS "HSISHA (PARACEL)" AND DESIGNATES THEM AS CHINESE. (IT IS INTERESTING THAT MFA CHINA EXPERT TOOK NEUTRAL POSITION ON OWNERSHIP IN REFTEL.)

3. SOVIET PRESS TREATMENT SO FAR HAS SHOWN AN AWARENESS OF SUCH PROBLEMS. TASS REPORTED SOUTH VIETNAMESE "WITHDRAWAL" OF REQUEST FOR SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING WITHOUT NOTING THAT SOVIET UNION OPPOSED MEETING. AND SOVIETS, WHILE PORTRAYING PRC AS AGGRESSOR, HAVE NOT PUBLICLY DEALT WITH QUESTION OF OWNERSHIP.DUBS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PARACEL ISLANDS, ISLAND CLAIMS, COMBAT OPERATIONS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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